

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
12 September 1966

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Situation in South Vietnam
(As of 9:00 AM EDT)

1. The evidence continues to indicate that there was a surprisingly high voter turnout in yesterday's election in South Vietnam. Final results sent into Saigon by SVN officials in the field now show that 80.8 percent of the country's 5.2 million registered voters turned out. By area, a partial list of voter turnout is as follows:

Saigon	66.5%
Gia Dinh	73%
I Corps	87.2%
II Corps	86.9%
III Corps	83.1%

The number of invalid votes currently appears to be running at about two percent of the total. The small number of invalid votes indicates that the Buddhist effort to have their followers cast invalid ballots was largely a failure.

2. On balance the large turnout of voters may be viewed as a strong vote of approval for the Government's efforts to begin building a democratically-based regime in SVN. It is also a spectacular setback for the Viet Cong who had mounted an intensive pre-election campaign of propaganda and terrorism in an effort to sabotage the voting.

3. It is not yet possible to give any detailed estimate of the composition of the newly elected assembly, since only partial returns are available

-2-

at this time. Some of the best known candidates, and not unexpected winners in the Saigon-Gia Dinh area include former chief of state Phan Khac Suu, Dr. Phan Quang Dan, noted economist Tran Van Van, and publisher Dang Van Sang. Reports of winners from outlying areas are as yet incomplete, but they will probably show that a large percentage of local luminaries (provincial and local council members, teachers, and similar figures) have won in the provinces.

4. In spite of a great deal of planning on the part of the Communists to sabotage the elections their efforts were largely ineffective. Government forces provided excellent security for communications routes and the polling areas and incidents were kept down to a minimum. Hanoi radio has already levelled a post-election charge that the voting was a fraud and that, "up to half a million men in the puppet army and police were mustered to make a house-to-house search and force the urban population to the polling booths." Moscow radio, not unexpectedly, has also termed the whole process a "falsification" of the people's will.

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